

increase of more than \$6 billion over 5 years—\$1.3 billion for the next year, budget year—to renew our community policing program. This will help to hire and redeploy an additional 30–50,000 community police officers over that same period. It will be the best investment we can make in a safe future for our children, and I hope we can pass it with your help.

We also, as has already been said, need to make sure that our police officers have 21st century tools to do their jobs. Today, drug dealers communicate by cell phones and pagers; scam artists work the Internet; gangs carry cutting-edge weaponry. Criminals have the best technology. Police should, too. Therefore, today I propose we devote \$350 million in the balanced budget to put crime-fighting technology into the hands of police officers.

For too long, we have seen some criminals go free because the methods used to gather evidence were not up-to-date. But when police can report from their squad cars, rather than return to the station to fill out paperwork, they spend more time on the beat. When officers can track crime as it happens, using innovative crime-mapping technology, they can respond more quickly and effectively.

Chief Samarra has told us what a difference these new tools can make here in Alexandria. And the Vice President has put together a task force to help more communities take maximum advantage of available technology.

Police carry a heavy burden, but we know they can't carry it alone, and we have to do more to engage all our communities in the fight against crime, to help win the fight police have been waging so successfully.

We also have in this budget additional funds for community-based crime-fighting, everything from neighborhood DA's to work closely with police and residents, to faith-based organizations to help to prevent juvenile crime.

And I want to say one last thing about the role of the police. We could never have gotten the prevention funds we have gotten in the last 5 years if the law enforcement community

hadn't advocated it. I was astonished when I came to Washington to see how many Members of Congress were literally afraid to vote for prevention, afraid that people back home would think they were soft on crime or weak or looking the other way. But when all the people in uniform who had their lives on the line came up and testified, "Hey, we cannot jail our way out of this problem. We've got to keep more of these kids out of trouble in the first place. That's the least expensive, most humane, most ethical to proceed here"—you made it possible for these programs to work.

One of the things that's really going to help you do your job is something that is going to be in my education budget I announced last week. We are going to triple the funds for after-school programs to keep kids learning in school—something positive, rather than learning something negative on the streets—when during the hours after school the juvenile crime rate soars. None of this would have been possible if the police officers of the country hadn't been willing to come to the Congress and say, "Hey, this works. Help us keep these kids out of trouble in the first place." So we thank you for that as well.

America is grateful for the hard work of our men and women in uniform. Every day you make our streets and schools safer, our homes more secure, and in so doing—make no mistake about it—you make freedom more real for the American people. We know you can't do it alone. We've tried to be good partners. We intend to be better partners as we move to the next century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:42 a.m. at the Alexandria Police Station. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Kerry J. Donley of Alexandria; Chief Charles E. Samarra, Alexandria Police Department; and Officer Irma Rivera, Arlington County Police Department. The President also referred to the Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) program.